

Message Text

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R 170920Z MAY 77
FM AMCONSUL NICE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1324
INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL BORDEAUX
AMCONSUL LYON
AMCONSUL MARSEILLE
AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

UNCLAS NICE 211

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, FR
SUBJECT: JACQUES CHIRAC S VISIT TO NICE MAY 15, 1977

1. SUMMARY - DURING HIS RECENT VISIT TO NICE TO ADDRESS A NATIONAL VETERANS ORGANIZATION, JACQUES CHIRAC AGAIN REITERATED R.P.R.'S DESIRE FOR A STRONG AND UNITED MAJORITY BUT ALSO UNDERSCORED HIS OPPOSITION TO THE PRIME MINISTER AS THE LOGICAL LEADER. END SUMMARY.

2. JACQUES CHIRAC, MAYOR OF PARIS AND PRESIDENT OF RASSEMBLEMENT POUR LA REPUBLIQUE (R.P.R.), VISITED NICE ON MAY 15, 1977 TO PARTICIPATE IN THE FINAL SESSION OF THE NATIONAL CONGRESS OF WAR VETERANS (ANCIENS COMBATTANTS). GREETED ON HIS ARRIVAL BY JACQUES MEDECIN, MAYOR OF NICE/SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TOURISM, CHIRAC JOINED STATE SECRETARY FOR VETERANS AFFAIRS ANDRE BORD AND OVER 2,800 CONGRESS PARTICIPANTS AT THE OPERA OF NICE.

3. DURING HIS DISCOURSE, CHIRAC EMPHASIZED HIS RESPONSIBILITY,
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PAGE 02 NICE 00211 171035Z

AS LEADER OF AN IMPORTANT FACTOR OF THE MAJORITY, IN PREPARING THE MAJORITY FOR THE LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS. WITH REGARD TO THOSE WHO ARE PRONE TO CRITICIZE HIS USE OF AUTHORITY, CHIRAC REMINDED THEM THAT ANY TRUE GAULLIST SHOULD BE FULLY AWARE OF THE FACT THAT AUTHORITY IS DERIVED FROM THE POPULAR CONSENT OF THE VOTERS. HE ALSO REMINDED HIS LISTENERS THAT DE GAULLE HIMSELF RESIGNED FOLLOWING HIS DEFEAT IN AN

ELECTION AS HE CONSIDERED THAT HE HAD LOST HIS AUTHORITY , WHICH CNA ONLY BE CONFERRED BY THE ELECTORS. CHIRAC, TOO, RETURNED TO HIS ELECTORS IN CORREZE FOLLOWING HIS RESIGNATION AS PRIME MINISTER. WHATEVER HAPPENS IN THE FUTURE, THE TRUE GAULLIST WILL ALWAYS FOLLOW THE POPULAR VOTE -- THUS ELIMINATING THE TEMPTATION TO GOVERN BY USURPED POWER.

4. CHIRAC REMINDED THE VETERANS THAT IT WAS HE WHO FIRST MENTIONED THE SUBJECT OF A POSSIBLE PACT IN THE MAJORITY. HE PROMISED THAT HE WOULD DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO ESTABLISH SUCH A PACT WITH ALL FACTIONS OF THE MAJORITY. A DEMOCRACY, SAID CHIRAC, IS A SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT WITH AUTHORITY IN WHICH THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH RESPECTS THE DECISIONS OF THE ELECTED. IT MUST ALSO BE A SYSTEM OF TOLERANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY. SUCH A DEMOCRACY IMPLIES A PERSONAL COMMITMENT WHICH INCLUDES NOT ONLY RIGHTS BUT ALSO DUTIES.

5. IN COMMENTING ON THE ROLE OF THE PRIME MINISTER, CHIRAC REVIEWED RECENT FRENCH HISTORY. BOTH GEORGES POMPIDOU AND PIERRE MESSMER, HE STATED, AS PRIME MINISTERS WERE CALLED UPON TO LEAD THE MAJORITY AT THE TIME OF THE CONSULTATIONS OF 1967 AND 1968 (FOR POMPIDOU) AND IN 1973 (FOR MESSMER). DURING THOSE PERIODS, THE PRESIDENT IN FUNCTION (I.E. DE GAULLE AND THEN POMPIDOU) CLEARLY INDICATED THAT THEY WOULD GIVE THEIR SUPPORT TO CERTAIN CNADIDATES., THAT THEY WOULD CAMPAIGN FOR THEM AND, SHOULD THEY LOSE THE MAJORITY, THEY THEMSELVES WOULD RESIGN. TODAY IN FRANCE, ACCORDING TO CHIRAC, THERE IS A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT SITUATION. SINCE VALERY GISCARD D ESTAING HAS EMPHATICALLY STATED THAT UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 NICE 00211 171035Z

HE WILL REMAIN AS PRESIDENT OF FRANCE NO MATTER WHAT THE OUTCOME OF THE LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS, HIS PRIME MINISTER HAS NO BASIS UPON WHICH TO ASSUME THE LEADERSHIP OF THE MAJORITY AS HIS PREDECESSORS HAVE DONE.

MURPHY

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